

Message Text

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ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 CAB-09 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY ACCRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3263

C O N F I D E N T I A L ACCRA 2145

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ETRN GH

SUBJ: CIVAIR: NEGOTIATIONS

REF: ACCRA 2113

1. THE NEW COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS, COL. AGYEKUM, CAME IN TO SEE ME THIS MORNING, IN PART TO CONFIRM HIS DESIRE TO VISIT THE STATES IN MID-MAY. (HE HAD ACCEPTED A TRAVEL GRANT IN HIS CAPACITY AS COMMISSIONER FOR THE NORTHERN REGION. UNDER REVISED PLANS, HE WILL BE INTERESTED IN TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS AS WELL. USIS WILL BE WORKING ON THIS PROGRAM DURING THE COMING WEEK.)

2. I TOOK OCCASION TO RAISE THE CIVIL AVIATION TALKS SCHEDULED TO BEGIN APRIL 23 WITH THE NEW COMMISSIONER. HE HAD NOT EVEN VISITED HIS OFFICE AND DID NOT KNOW ABOUT THEM. HIS PRELIMINARY REACTION WAS TO PROPOSE THEY CONTINUE AS SCHEDULED, ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT A NUMBER OF TECHNICAL MATTERS COULD BE USEFULLY DISCUSSED. I NOTED TO HIM THE FACT THAT LANDING RIGHTS IN NEW YORK WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY BE A PRINCIPAL OBSTACLE FROM OUR STANDPOINT, AND BRIEFLY EXPLAINED THE REASONS. I ALSO SUGGESTED, MAKING IT CLEAR MY VIEWS WERE PERSONAL, THAT THE QUESTION OF LANDING RIGHTS MIGHT BE PUT INTO A SEPARATE ANNEX TO ANY AGREEMENT, THUS POSTPONING THE ISSUE UNTIL A LATER DATE. COL. AGYEKUM WAS WITHOUT ANY KNOWLEDGE OF THE PROBLEM, BUT
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HE LISTENED TO MY SUGGESTION SYMPATHETICALLY. AT THE END OF

OUR TALK HE REAFFIRMED HIS FEELING THAT THE TALKS SHOULD CONTINUE AS PLANNED. HE AGREED, HOWEVER, TO LET THE EMBASSY KNOW BY FRIDAY IF THERE WERE ANY CHANGE IN GOG ATTITUDE.

3. COMMENT. COL. AGYEKUM'S VISIT WAS FORTUITOUS IN THAT I HAD A CHANCE BOTH TO ALERT HIM TO THE TALKS AND MAKE THE ABOVE SUGGESTION, WHICH I ASSUME COINCIDES WITH THE DEPARTMENT'S CURRENT THINKING ON THE PROBLEM. I THINK WE SHOULD ASSUME THAT THE TALKS WILL PROCEED ON SCHEDULE. COL. AGYEKUM WILL PROBABLY PLAY AT MOST A NOMINAL ROLE. THIS ALSO MEANS THAT DWEMOH, DIRECTOR OF CIVIL AVIATION, WHO WILL HAVE THE REAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR PRESENTING THE GOG POSITION, WILL BE FREE FROM THE ERRATIC PRESSURES OF THE FORMER COMMISSIONER, MAJOR ASANTE. THIS DOES NOT NECESSARILY MEAN A REAL CHANGE IN GOG POSITION, BUT IT DOES SUGGEST SOMEWHAT GREATER FLEXIBILITY.
HANSON

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